

Hope Muir Appointed Artistic Director of The National Ballet of Canada

July 7, 2021... The Board of Directors of The National Ballet of Canada today announced that following a two-year international search, **Hope Muir** has been appointed Artistic Director of the company effective January 1, 2022.

*"I am so pleased to welcome Hope to The National Ballet of Canada and home to Toronto," said **Cornell Wright**, Chair of the Board of Directors. "Her unwavering dedication to excellence and deep knowledge of both classical and contemporary repertoire, make her the perfect choice to lead The National Ballet of Canada into its next chapter."*

Ms. Muir succeeds **Karen Kain** who stepped down as Artistic Director on June 30, 2021 and was named Artistic Director Emerita.

"I am thrilled to be the next Artistic Director of this wonderful company," said Ms. Muir. "I am humbled to be following in the footsteps of Karen Kain and so grateful to her for the support and kindness she has shown me as I move into this role. The National Ballet of Canada is one of the world's leading companies with a roster of brilliant dancers and a rich and unique repertoire. I look forward to continuing the standard of excellence that has been built over many years and to cultivating an inclusive, supportive environment in which creativity and innovation can flourish."

Born in Toronto, Ms. Muir has had an accomplished career in both the UK and US. She is currently Artistic Director of Charlotte Ballet in North Carolina, a position she has held since 2017. During her tenure at Charlotte Ballet, Ms. Muir has commissioned 12 world premieres and presented six US premieres. Previously, she was Assistant Artistic Director of Scottish Ballet and a sought-after rehearsal director and teacher for companies around the world.

With The National Ballet of Canada, Ms. Muir assisted **Crystal Pite** on the creation of *Emergence* in 2009 and staged the company premiere of **Christopher Bruce's** *Rooster* in 2008. She was also a guest teacher in 2011.

*"I could not be handing the reins to a more talented and capable person. Hope is one of the most thoughtful and inspired leaders working in ballet today and I am so pleased she is coming home to Canada. It was a joy to have her in the studio with our dancers at the beginning of my tenure as Artistic Director and I have watched her career go from success to success since then. She will be a wonderful partner to Executive Director **Barry Hughson** and I am so excited for the future of this organization," said Ms. Kain.*

"Throughout her more than 30-year career as a dancer, teacher and director, Hope has always been motivated by a desire to move the artform of ballet forward, to cultivate new voices and to challenge dancers to expand their artistry. These values perfectly align with The National Ballet of Canada and I know the entire company will welcome her with open arms," said Mr. Hughson.

In addition to her extensive experience as teacher and director, Ms. Muir had a 20-year career as a dancer, performing with English National Ballet, Rambert Dance Company and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. She danced a wide variety of repertoire from internationally renowned choreographers including Sir Frederick Ashton, George Balanchine, August Bournonville, Christopher Bruce, Merce Cunningham, John Cranko, Javier De Frutos, Mats Ek, William Forsythe, Ronald Hynd, Jiří Kylián, Harald Lander, Natalia Makarova, Ohad Naharin, Peter Schaufuss, Mary Skeaping, Ben Stevenson, Glen Tetley and Twyla Tharp.

The National Ballet of Canada was formed in 1951 and has had the following Artistic Directors:

Celia Franca (founder), 1951 – 1974
David Haber, 1974 – 1975
Celia Franca, 1975 – 1976
Alexander Grant, 1976 – 1983
Erik Bruhn, 1983 – 1986
Valerie Wilder and Lynn Wallis, 1986 – 1989
Reid Anderson, 1989 – 1996
James Kudelka, 1996 – 2005
Karen Kain, 2005 – 2021

– 30 –

BMO Financial Group Presents the 2021/22 Season.

Emergence is generously supported by Gail Hutchison.

Rooster is generously supported by Rosamond Ivey, Robert & Judith Lawrie, Gretchen Ross & Donald Ross, O.C. and Sir Neil & Lady Elizabeth Shaw.

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